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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 DOHA 000718

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [QA](#)  
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR VISIT OF DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL  
MARK FILIP TO QATAR

REF: DOHA 664

Classified By: Ambassador Joseph E. LeBaron, for reasons 1.4 (b, d)

11. (C) Embassy Doha welcomes your visit to Qatar. You are scheduled to meet with Qatar's Attorney General, Dr. Ali bin Fetais Al-Marri, and either the Director or Deputy Director of Qatar State Security (QSS). Dr. Al-Marri may also host a lunch in your honor that would include other Qatari judicial, security and law enforcement leaders.

12. (C) Below we provide the Country Team's views on how your visit can best advance the U.S. Government's strategic objectives in Qatar. We also discuss the key strategic trends in the bilateral relationship over the coming three years. We start, however, with a brief review of the bilateral relationship.

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THE U.S.-QATAR RELATIONSHIP  
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13. (C) The breadth and depth of Qatar's relationship with the U.S. is impressive, especially for a country the size of Connecticut, with only 1.7 million inhabitants, of whom only about 225,000 are actually Qatari citizens.

-- The U.S.-Qatar law enforcement cooperation has deepened considerably over the past few years, and the GOQ has shown an commendable commitment to rule of law. In lieu of an extradition treaty, the Qataris have deported to U.S. custody several American citizen fugitives, and cooperate regularly with our Legal Attache. The Ministry of Interior, which has authority over law enforcement agencies in Qatar, sends large numbers of their personnel to U.S. universities and private training institutes. The MOI and judiciary have welcomed visits and training by U.S. experts.

-- Qatar's location, wide-ranging foreign relations, fast-growing economy, and expanding transportation links have made counterterrorism cooperation, including counterterrorist financing, a key aspect of our relationship. Qatar's wealth, in particular, means its citizens are potential sources of money for violent extremists and cooperative efforts to target and prevent these financial flows are central to our bilateral agenda.

-- The U.S.-Qatar military relationship is extremely important. Qatar provides the U.S. military exceptional access to two major Qatari military installations, Al Udaid Air Base and Camp As-Saliyah - perhaps CENTCOM's most important operating installations outside of Iraq. Qatar charges us no rent, and in fact is funding over \$700 million in construction projects for the exclusive use of the U.S. military.

-- The economic relationship between Qatar and the United States is vital. U.S. energy companies have invested tens of

billions of dollars in the oil and gas industry here. Qatar, which holds the third largest natural gas reserves in the world after Iran and Russia, is expected to become in 2009 one of the most important suppliers of imported liquefied natural gas (LNG) to the U.S. market.

-- Because it is so small and its energy resources so large, Qatar now has an annual per capita income of over \$60,000. Even through the current global financial crisis, Qatar's national revenues will continue growing, and Qatar should soon have the highest per capita income in the world.

-- Vast wealth has bolstered the country's political ambitions, leading to Qatari foreign policy initiatives that too often been at odds with U.S. objectives. Examples include Qatar's relations with Hamas, Hezbollah, and Sudan.

-- Our educational and cultural relationship with Qatar is strong and growing. Qatar has committed itself like few other Arab states to modernizing its educational system, and has turned decisively to the United States for help. Qatar has imported branch campuses of six U.S. universities, including Texas A&M, Carnegie-Mellon, Weill-Cornell Medical School, Georgetown, Virginia Commonwealth, and Northwestern. At the elementary and secondary levels it is instituting a U.S. model of charter schools.

-- The U.S. government is concerned about the treatment of foreign workers in Qatar. Qatar's rapid growth, and the resulting massive demand for foreign workers to develop the country's infrastructure often leads to exploitation and abysmal working conditions for the laborers. Qatar has been

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ranked Tier 3 - the lowest - in the State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report for 2008.

-- Given Qatar's wealth, the country has great potential to be a partner in U.S. policy initiatives to provide aid to struggling regional states. We frequently approach them about participating financially in these initiatives.

-- Al Jazeera, the television network with an Arabic-speaking audience of some 60 million, is based on Qatar and funded by the Amir. The network's biased coverage, particularly of issues important to the U.S., has long been an irritant in our bilateral relationship. We nevertheless recognize the value of appearing on Al Jazeera in order to ensure that official U.S. voices are heard in the Arab world.

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THE COUNTERTERRORISM AND LAW ENFORCEMENT RELATIONSHIPS:  
KEY TRENDS THROUGH 2011  
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14. (S) Over the next three years, we believe the following are the major trends with the greatest impact on our counterterrorism and law enforcement relationship. It is here where your visit, and those of other senior USG officials, can have the most important impact.

-- Due to its small size and great wealth, Qatar will not be a major source of jihadists leaving to engage in terrorism. Some of Qatar's citizens, however, may support terrorism financially, perhaps outstripping the ability of the government to stop it.

-- We expect that Qatar will continue to be an inconsistent partner in combating terrorism, in part because of fear of embarrassment by acknowledging problems - and in part because more engagement might antagonize extremist groups and invite an attack.

-- The population of foreigners will continue growing (foreigners already outnumber Qatari citizens by seven-to-one). The societal changes that come with this

rapid population growth will outpace the government's ability to effectively address the law enforcement challenges it faces.

-- Qatar's crime rate is among the lowest in the world, but there has been a 330% increase in crime across the board since 2005. This trend, in particular, will continue along with the country's demographic shifts. Rapid economic development will also increase opportunities for money laundering and cybercrime.

-- Meanwhile, Qatar's law enforcement agencies will continue facing formidable challenges in staffing and retaining quality personnel as they work to shift to an all-Qatari police and military force.

-- Qatar's judiciary is largely independent. The same standards of law apply to both Qataris and expatriates, and this positive rule of law trend will continue.

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COUNTERTERRORISM: A MAJOR GOAL  
FOR OUR STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT  
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15. (S) Although cooperation on law enforcement issues has improved markedly over the past few years, counterterrorism cooperation and intelligence sharing has lagged. The U.S. has a strong interest in improving this cooperation.

-- (S) There are policy and attitudinal differences between the U.S. and Qatar over terrorism, particularly with respect to Hamas. For example, Hamas is viewed very differently than Al-Qaida and its ilk. This is a major point of friction in the bilateral relationship that stands in the way of greater cooperation on the political level.

-- (S) The intelligence on Qatar's official support for Hamas is inconclusive, with divisions on this issue even within the U.S. intelligence community. The USG needs a more accurate picture of the role of the Qatari Government and its citizens in financing - or tolerating the financing of - terrorism, especially funds directed towards Hamas.

-- (S) As noted above, as Qatar's financial sector expands and the country's wealth grows, so too will the potential for Qatar to be a source of money from private Qatar citizens to terrorist groups. Qatar's Central Bank currently cooperates

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on a range of anti-terrorist finance efforts, and we need are working to expand that cooperation. Qatar has an agency charged with regulating foreign charitable contributions by its citizens and we need to deepen our relationship with it.

-- (S) In addition to more cooperation on terrorist finance, we need more information sharing, more access to suspects of concern, and more coordinated effort to disrupt Al-Qaida-related funding and logistical activities in and through Qatar.

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HOW YOUR VISIT CAN HELP THESE STRATEGIC GOALS  
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16. (S) We believe the following approach will help your visit advance these goals:

-- (C) Continue the positive, senior-level dialogue on the al-Subaie case that has thus far included visit to Qatar by AG Mukasey, FBI Director Mueller, CIA Director Hayden, Treasury U/S Levey, and Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Wainstein. You should thank the Qataris for their cooperation to date, encourage continued cooperation, and highlight recently passed intelligence suggesting a continued serious threat posed by

al-Subaie and his circle. (You will be briefed separately on this issue both in Washington and at the Embassy in Doha prior to your meetings here.)

-- (C) Encourage Qatar's Attorney General to respond positively on a long-standing request for banking records associated with the Qatari citizen Ali al-Marri, currently in Naval Brig in Charleston, South Carolina. Working together to prosecute Ali al-Marri would be an important gesture of CT and law enforcement cooperation. The Qatari AG told us earlier this year that the USG's refusal to return Al-Jazeera cameraman (and Sudanese citizen) Sami al-Hajj to Qatar rather than Sudan was a personal embarrassment and led to his decision to decline our judicial assistance request on Ali al-Marri. He has subsequently said he would reconsider the decision, but has not followed through.

-- (S) Note our continued interest in cooperation on combating terrorist finance. The IMF recently issued a report which the local press touted as a "clean bill of health" on financial crimes and money-laundering. The reality is more complicated, and while our cooperation with the Qatar Central Bank is good, the Qataris need to be reminded of the constant need for vigilance. (Principal responsibility for this issue lies with the Qatar Central Bank, with which you are not meeting. Qatar's AG is not directly involved. QSS, however, gets involved in the when financial crimes are investigated and prosecuted, and a brief discussion of this issue with QSS leadership would be useful.)

LeBaron